

BLM Study Review of Hells Canyon Studies

E.3.2-25 Medium – Sized Mammal Resources in the Hells Canyon Study Area

1. INTRODUCTION

The study objective was to determine the presence and relative abundance of medium-sized mammals. The medium sized mammal category focused on in this report belong to the orders Lagomorph and Rodentia. Mammal surveys were conducted at point count/circular plots selected for the non-game bird survey study. Carnivores were also included in this report, although data came from another study and report.

2. CONCLUSION

Twenty-seven medium sized mammals may occur in the HCC. The survey documented 17 of the 27 mammals potentially occurring in the HCC study area.

3. STUDY ADEQUACY

Using point data/circular plot methodology rather than transects likely reduced the chances of encountering some of the mammal species known to be in the HCC area. Only 5 species of medium-sized mammals were observed during point count surveys while 12 species were observed “incidentally, during scent-post surveys, or at remote cameral stations. Comparison of species density data from other IPC sites such as C. J. Strike reservoir were compared with results of the medium-sized mammal survey at HCC. The question arises as to how compatible the data sets were for comparison. Was the data from other sites along the Snake River, upstream of HCC, collected using the point data/circular plot methodology?

4. BLM CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS: The BLM believes that the point data/circular plot method likely resulted in lower abundance ratings for some mammals and obviously totally missed encountering other species. The study can at best only be relied upon to provide presence/absence information for a particular species

RECOMMENDATIONS: Although this study was created to gather baseline information, a habitat quality evaluation component would have provided valuable data for evaluating IPCs potential impacts on these species in the HCC corridor.